(c) whether it is also a fact that the Airports Authority of India had initiated a study with the assistance of an international aviation consultant to restructure the present airspace to bring in more technological advancement for providing upgraded air services; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL):

(a) and (b) Studies had been carried out for upgrading the infrastructure at Chhattrapati Shivaji International (CSI) Airport, Mumbai and Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport for the introduction of the airbus A-380 aircraft. IGI Airport does not have much airside clearance problems unlike CSI Airport. However, infrastructure have to be modified and upgraded. New airport projects for Hyderabad and Bangalore, that are in advanced state for commencement will cater to the A-380 aircraft.

(c) and (d) An American company has been engaged for a study on restructuring of Indian airspace and other associated issues as per the terms of the Grant Agreement signed with United States Trade and Development Agency. The report of the first phase of the study is expected to be received in January, 2005.

Courier service by IA

1162. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Airlines plans courier service in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when, it is proposed to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Indian Airlines plans to convert five B-737 aircraft into freighter aircraft and operate courier service with Nagpur as a hub. The service is to be launched in thirty one cities in two phases.

(c) It is not possible to indicate a definite time frame for commencing the courier service, at this stage.